

**Blind Task Force Meeting  
November 14, 2007  
Missouri School Boards Association (MSBA)  
2100 I-70 Drive, S.W.  
Columbia, Missouri**

**Members Present:** Paul Ajuwon; Steve Berman; Donna Borgmeyer; Michael Evans; Susan Ford; Chip Hailey; Karen Halsey; Kent Kolaga; Patti Schonlau; Jim Sucharski; Jacob Wilson; Ella Wolfe

**Members Not Present:** Kristi Hinton; Heidi Atkins-Lieberman

**Guests Present:** Jan DeHart; Jennifer Coy

**DESE Staff Present:** Lori Conner; Heike Imler; Cynthia Quetsch

**Welcome and Introductions:**

**Call to Order/Introductions:** Patti Schonlau called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Steve Berman took roll call.

The question of proxy was addressed. Patti Schonlau reported that she had received a memo from Heidi Atkins Lieberman stating that Heike Imler would attend today's meeting on her behalf.

**Review and Approval of November 14, 2007 BTF Agenda:** The following changes were made to the Agenda: move item #12, "Current BTF Membership Vacancies" to follow item #5, "BTF Nomination Form Issues/Memo," as they are related; and move item #C, "Annual Study Committee" from the "Ad hoc Committee Updates" section to item #C of the "Standing Committee Updates" section.

Chip Hailey made a motion to accept the above-agenda changes. Donna Borgmeyer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Review and Approval of August 8, 2007 BTF Minutes:** Page 3, under the topic, "Current Workshops/Events within State" section: Move the first paragraph, "Jim Sucharski will be attending the National Agenda, APH meeting, and MCB meeting. He also announced...." and put it under a new topic titled, "National Agenda and MSB Report."

Page 3: under "Current Workshops/Events Within the State," third paragraph, the parenthetical phrase "(including transportation)" should to be moved to follow "employment." Note: The issue of transportation is not related to public school education but rather employment.

Ella Wolfe made a motion to accept the above-changes to the minutes. Susan Ford seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**BTF Nomination Form Issues/Memo:** Cynthia Quetsch, Legal Counsel, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, presented a memo from Assistant Commissioner Heidi Atkins Lieberman on issues of concern regarding the BTF nomination form: the composition of the Task Force and whether the duties listed on the form are consistent with the statute. The Statute states: "This task force shall develop goals and objectives to guide the improvement of special education, related services, vocational training, transition from school to work, rehabilitation services, independent living and employment outcomes for eligible students." The nomination form includes duties not found in the statute. There was considerable discussion regarding the makeup of the Task Force.

Susan Ford moved that this discussion be continued at the next BTF meeting that Heidi Atkins Lieberman could attend. Donna Borgmeyer seconded the move and it was accepted by majority vote.

**Current BTF Membership Vacancies:** The current BTF membership vacancies are: School Building Principal, Rehab Council for the Blind Representative and Parent Representative.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) received an application for the School Building Principal vacancy (but it could not be accepted as it was from an assistant principal). A nomination form was received for the Rehab Council for the Blind vacancy, but DESE is still awaiting the resume.

**General Information for Blind Task Force Meetings:** A memo from the Special Education Assistant Commissioner, Heidi Atkins Lieberman, regarding seating arrangements of the BTF was discussed.

Ella Wolfe made a motion to establish a standing rules committee of Task Force Members to discuss this further. Michael Evans seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**NIMAS/NIMAC:** Nothing reported as Elaine Houtman from Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) was unable to present at today's meeting.

**Continuing Education for VI Educators:** There was discussion regarding educators of the visually impaired. The DESE will report further at the February 2008 BTF meeting.

**Executive Summary Report on the Shared Vision Meeting:** The Executive Summary Report was sent out to the Task Force for their comments prior to today's meeting.

**National Agenda:** Two important areas of discussion: accessible textbooks; transition and knowledge of parents to have expanded core curriculum.

**Election of BTF Officers:**

- Chair: Chip Hailey moved that the nomination for chair be ceased and Patti Schonlau elected by acclamation. Donna Borgmeyer seconded the move and it was unanimously approved.
- Vice Chair: Chip Hailey moved that the nomination for vice-chair be ceased and Donna Borgmeyer elected by acclamation. Susan Ford seconded the move and it was unanimously approved.
- Secretary: Chip Hailey moved that the nomination for secretary be ceased and Ella Wolfe elected by acclamation. Susan Ford seconded the move and it was unanimously approved.

**Location of 2008 Meetings/Lunch Caterer:** The DESE will contact Heavenly Ham and the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA) to inquire about reserving the 2008 BTF meeting dates of February 13, May 14, August 13 and November 12 for lunch catering and meeting room/refreshment catering.

**Standing Committee Updates**

**Budget/Governmental Affairs Committee:** It was reported that federal legislature contacts need to be established.

**Transition Committee:** Nothing to report.

**Annual Study Committee:** It was reported that the BTF made recommendations that were sent to the advisory group, voted on and submitted.

Kent Kolaga made a motion for the BTF to re-submit to the DESE the same information they have submitted in the past. Donna Borgmeyer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

### **Ad hoc Committee Updates**

**MAP Improvement Committee:** It was reported at the last BTF meeting that individuals were needed to help with the Braille testing program. Eighteen Braille readers and 18 sighted individuals are needed for the January 24-25, 2008 math, communication arts and science Braille testing program.

**Outreach Ad Hoc Committee:** Nothing to report. The BTF discussed dissolving the Outreach Ad hoc Committee and moving the summer program to the Transition Committee.

**BSS Effectiveness Study Committee:** The committee has received the three-question feedback piece to give to district personnel; mid-year report returned to DESE in December and June. DESE will report in February.

**Vision Summit 2008 Committee:** The Vision Summit Committee met for a conference call on September 4, September 27 and October 25, 2007. The Vision Summit will be held April 2-3, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Select, Columbia, Missouri.

Missouri School for the Blind (MSB) will coordinate the hotel rooms. The committee has asked state agencies and exhibitors to donate raffle/door prizes; the St. Louis Society is donating \$500. The National Federation of the Blind is funding all travel expenses for the Vision Summit's opening speaker, Dr. H. David Wohler's, Department of Chemistry at Truman State University. The Lighthouse for the Blind is funding all travel expenses for the second day keynote speaker, Dr. Susan Osterhaus. Missouri Council for the Blind (MCB) is funding breakfast on day two of the Vision Summit.

Kent Kolaga made a motion to set up a BTF revolving account for the Vision Summit. Steve Berman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

For details about conference calls held by the Vision Summit committee please refer to the following website:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/EffectivePractices/btfcommittees.htm>

**Governor's Council for Disabilities Update:** The 2007-08 Missouri Poster and Journalism Contest deadline is February 29, 2008; flyers were distributed to the Task Force.

**Youth Leadership Forum:** Nominations for the inclusion awards have been received; the judging will be announced in the near future. The Legislative Education Project (LEP) has been revamped for next year.

**Current Workshops/Events within the State:** The 2008 Power Up Conference and Expo is scheduled for April 21-22, at Tan-Tar-A Resort, Lake Ozark, Missouri.

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Braille readers program, "Braille Readers Are Leaders 2007-2008 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Contest for Blind Youth" began November 1 and ends on January 4 (Louis Braille's birth date). Teachers may register interested students online, to participate (where they read as much non-textual materials as they can and compete with other students in Braille).

The 2008 National Federation of the Blind of Missouri State Convention will be held in St. Louis at the Crown Plaza Airport Hotel March 28-30, 2008.

**BTF Meeting Dates:** The BTF meeting dates for 2008 are:

- February 13
- May 14
- August 13
- November 12

**Agenda for Next Meeting:** Topics to include in the February 13, 2008 Agenda include: Vision Summit, Transition.

Chip Hailey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Donna Borgmeyer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The BTF meeting was adjourned at 2:25 pm.